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ABSTRACT

A compendium of reading instructional practices from approximately 1950 through 1970, this compilation of essays supplies a theoretical background of the reading discipline for elementary and secondary school reading instructors. The five articles deal with different aspects of the reading curriculum. "The Basics in the Reading Curriculum" describes the diverse methods used to teach reading, while "Basal Readers, the Pupil, and the Curriculum" discusses some of the strengths and weaknesses inherent in the classroom use of basal readers. "Issues in Designing the Reading Curriculum" examines concepts such as scope and sequence, as well as issues such as deductive versus inductive learning. "Reading in the Content Areas" argues for interesting, meaningful, and purposeful reading material regardless of curriculum area. "Evaluating Progress in Reading" explores evaluation techniques that reading teachers can use to measure student progress, and concludes that reading comprehension appraisal procedures should motivate students to read content which guides each to achieve optimal development in this curriculum area. (NKA)

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THE BASICS IN THE READING CURRICULUM
(A Collection of Essays)

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THE BASICS IN THE READING CURRICULUM

There has been considerable criticism of pupil achievement in the reading curriculum. The lay public generally has felt that many pupils graduate from high school and yet function inadequately in society due to a lack of achievement in reading. Reading is considered as one of the basics in the curriculum. It is also one of the three R's (reading, writing, and arithmetic). Citizens in society have always placed a very high premium on individuals possessing the ability to read well. In Puritan schools in Colonial America, the major goal of instruction was that pupils should learn to read the Bible. Thus, in the earliest history of American education, reading was the main skill of instruction emphasized in the school-class setting.

Problems in the Teaching of Reading

There appears to be no disagreement on the part of the lay public in identifying reading as a major basic in the school curriculum. There seemingly is much disagreement in terms of how reading should be taught. Which then is the best means of assisting pupils to become good readers? To answer this relevant question, selected significant problems such as the following need identification:

1. Should the learner be actively involved in choosing reading materials such as in individualized reading programs? In individualized reading, the learner selects which library

books to read sequentially. After the reading of a library book, the pupil generally has a conference with the teacher to determine comprehension, attitudes toward reading, and specific difficulties experienced.

2. Should the teacher or teachers within a school select a reputable series of basal readers for teaching-learning situations in reading? These readers contain a teacher's manual which may provide excellent suggestions for the teaching of reading. Writers of these basal readers may then be quite instrumental in determining content as well as skills for pupils to master in reading. The teacher may bring in his or her own ideas in the teaching of reading along with those suggested by writers of the basal text.

   The teacher may also write measurable objectives for pupils to achieve covering understandings, skills, and attitudes within the framework of the adopted series of basal readers. Pupils achievement may then be measured in terms of these specific ends.

3. Should the programmer determine what pupils are to learn as well as the sequence of learnings in programmed reading? In the utilization of programmed materials in the reading arena, the programmer determines completely the content and skills pupils are to attain

in each small step of learning. In a programmed textbook, the pupil generally reads a sentence or two, responds to a completion item, and then checks his or her own answer. A correct response involves reinforcement. If a pupil made an incorrect response, the correct answer is now known and this learner is also ready to respond to the next sequential item. This procedure is followed again and again in the use of programmed reading materials.

4. Should linguistic approaches in the teaching of reading receive major emphasis as basic content in the curriculum? There are numerous linguistic approaches in the teaching of reading. The patterns approach is a form of linguistics in the teaching of reading. Thus, pupils would learn to identify words in isolation or within the sentence framework in terms of the patterns approach. For example, Cat sat on fat hat. The word "cat" patterns with "sat", "fat", and "hat." An initial consonant is changed in each of these words resulting in a new word, e.g. change the letter "c" in "cat" to the letter "s" resulting in the new word "sat." Initially, pupils learn to read words, sentences, and stories in which words are consistent in terms of sound-symbol relationships, e.g. ban, can, Dan, fan, man, Nan, pan, ran, tan,

and van. Later on, in proper sequence, learners would study words in sentences and stories which contain irregularly spelled words.

There, of course, are numerous other approaches utilized in the teaching of reading. These include the following:

1. The Initial Teaching Alphabet.
2. The language experience approach.
3. The Distar plan.

Concluding Statements

Diverse methods have been described pertaining to the the teaching of reading, one of the basics in the school curriculum. Each of these methods may well stress the importance of the first of the three R's-reading. There are additional questions which might well be asked pertaining to specifics in reading instruction:

1. How much emphasis should phonics instruction receive?
2. Which criteria should be utilized in selecting content to be read in the reading curriculum? Much emphasis in reading instruction has gone into pupils developing appropriate word recognition techniques as well as achieving relevant comprehension skills. The question then arises-Are there basics in terms of facts, concepts, and generalizations learners should acquire in the literature curriculum?

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BASAL READERS, THE PUPIL, AND THE CURRICULUM

Using reputable basal readers in teaching-learning situations involving reading certainly has much to recommend itself. Thus, in the use of these readers the teacher

1. has a related manual from which many valuable learning activities for pupils can be obtained.

2. can provide sequential learnings for pupils when following the order of content presented in these textbooks.

3. has available stories in these readers which can be interesting to many pupils.

4. can follow recommended principles of learning when, prior to engaging in reading a new selection, pupils experience appropriate readiness activities as recommended in the manual section.

Basal readers are utilized rather heavily in many schools to provide learning activities for pupils in the curriculum area of reading. Thus, it is imperative that pupils acquire optimal achievement in reading as a result of developing needed understandings, skills, and attitudes from the use of basal readers. How can the use of basal readers then guide pupils to become proficient readers?

Weakness and Recommendations in the Use of Basal Readers

To discuss ways in which the utilization of basal readers can aid pupils to achieve optimal development in reading, weaknesses of this program of instruction need to be discussed.

Too frequently, a set of pupils is expected to be at the same place

at the same time when basal readers are utilized in ongoing learning activities. If, for example, a set of seven pupils is to read a selected section of the basal reader silently, each of these learners has to wait quietly for others in this group to finish reading the required pages. Thus, the child who reads rapidly and accurately has to wait for the other six learners to complete reading the assigned number of pages before related content can be discussed. During the time a learner waits for others to complete reading a required selection, he or she may become restless and be called down by a rather strict teacher. Weaknesses inherent in this situation include the following psychological principles:

1. satisfying experiences in learning may be lost by the pupil who has to wait for others to complete the silent reading assignment.

2. sequential learnings are not in evidence for the good reader who must wait for others to complete the reading assignment in order to discuss related ideas.

3. frustrated feelings may be an end result for the slow reader trying to compete with faster readers in completing a specific reading assignment.

Too frequently when content is discussed from a specific selection in the basal reader, questions from the manual section emphasize the recall level of cognition. Thus, pupils recall facts in relationship to questions asked by the teacher. For example, after related readiness activities have been provided for pupils prior to reading a given selection in the basal reader, the teacher may state the following purpose: Let's read to find out how Robert felt about dogs.

Thus, pupils read one or two pages on the first or second grade level

to obtain information related to the purpose. The purpose for reading is then mentioned by pupils. Usually, one pupil only can respond to a recall level question. The teacher may give little or no time for learners to state their feelings toward diverse kinds of dogs or, for example, how Robert in the story could learn to like dogs under the described circumstances.

Thus, pupils in a discussion pertaining to content read should have ample opportunities to

1. engage in levels of thinking higher than the recall level such as in critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem solving.

2. reveal understandings gained in a variety of ways such as drawing a related picture or pictures, and/or dramatizing content.

The teacher needs to use teaching suggestions from a manual related to the basal reader in a creative manner. Thus, learning activities for pupils in a group should be selected on the basis of

1. providing sequential understandings, skills, and attitudes.

2. providing for the interests, needs and purposes of each learner in the class setting.

Pupils in a reading group may become too competitive after having been assigned to read silently a certain number of pages. This may be true even if the teacher has provided appropriate readiness experiences for learners prior to the silent reading activity. Pupils in the reading group can and do vary much from each other in reading achievement. Thus, for example, child A being the most proficient reader in the group, may

1. be critical of others who need more time to complete the assigned reading.

2. laugh at selected pupils who do not pronounce words accurately in a follow-up oral reading activity.

3. receive instruction in selected phonetic analysis skills that definitely are not needed. Reading well orally and comprehending content in print effectively is proof that the individual learner does not need related learning activities in phonetic analysis. These learners need challenging reading materials based on their interests, needs, and purposes. They also need to learn new word attack skills. Sequential learnings are needed for all pupils to attain optimal achievement in understandings, skills, and attitudinal objectives in reading.

In Closing

Pupils with teacher guidance should develop needed understandings, skills, and attitudinal objectives in reading which are:

1. sequential from the pupil's own unique perception.
2. purposeful to the learner.
3. meaningful and provide for each learner in the class setting.

ISSUES IN DESIGNING THE READING CURRICULUM

There are relevant ingredients to incorporate into the reading curriculum. Scope and sequence are vital concepts to consider. Scope answers the question pertaining to what should be taught. Sequence pertains to when selected learnings should be emphasized in teaching situations.

Additional issues to consider in curriculum design include deductive versus inductive learning, as well as means in organizing the curriculum such as separate subjects, correlation, fused, and integrated approaches.

Scope in Reading

Which understandings, skills, and attitudes should be emphasized in reading? This question deals with the problem of scope.

If much emphasis is placed upon understandings goals, learners may then achieve vital facts, concepts, and generalizations. Attaining subject matter knowledge then receives paramount importance. Stress is placed upon achieving ideas, content, and information. Basal textbooks, related workbooks, and worksheets and their uses might well aid learners to gain subject matter knowledge.

Should emphasis be placed upon skills ends, students might attain abilities in:

1. word recognition techniques. These abilities include using phonics, syllabication, structural analysis, picture clues, sight method approaches, and context clues.

2. comprehension of content. Comprehending facts, directions, and sequence of subject matter is important. Additional comprehension skills include critical reading, creative reading, and scanning.

Teachers selecting goals stressing skills ends need to select worthwhile objectives from a study of learner needs and the manual section of basal readers.

Attitudinal goals emphasis advocates pupils reading for:

1. enjoyment and appreciations.

2. personal development and self actualization.

3. problem solving and creative endeavors.

4. guidance purposes and talent development.

Issues inherent in determining scope in the reading curriculum include the following:

1. Which of the three categories of objectives should receive major emphasis--understandings (learning of subject matter), skills (achieving abilities in learning to read more effectively), or attitudes (attaining values, attitudes and interests)?

2. What should be the breadth of objectives? If objectives need to be deleted, which is to be deleted due to economy of time factors in the reading curriculum--acquiring subject matter, achieving abilities, or developing positive ttitudes?

3. Are selected objectives more basic or essential to achieve compared to others--understandings, skills, or attitudes? Which of the three categories should receive major emphasis?

4. Which ends might be stressed as enrichment or incidental learnings of the previously named categories in issue number three?

5. Who should be involved in determining goals in reading?
   (a) teachers
   (b) supervisors
   (c) students
   (d) parents
   (e) other interested lay people, such as individuals from the business world.

Sequence in Reading

Order in attaining objectives is highly relevant to consider. For optimal student achievement, sequence must be experienced in learning. Thus, should goals chosen for student achievement be emphasized on the kindergarten, grade one, grade two, or higher grade levels. Also, within any grade level, the objectives need to be sequential.

Should sequence be determined by teachers following ordered stories from basal readers? The writers of the textbooks may then determine sequential learnings for students. The teacher might make a few modifications based on learner needs and interests.

If sequence comes from learners, then each student may choose the order of library books to be read and report upon. The student then selects the sequence

of books to complete. The involved learner might also decide upon means of revealing progress in reading.

Thus, should sequence for students be determined by the teacher? Or, does order in learning reside within the learner.

Pertaining to sequence in learning, Gagne[1] wrote:

> Most investigators of the process of instruction acknowledge the importance for planning of finding out what the learner brings to the learning situation. Glaser (1967), for example, has often emphasized the importance of entering behavior as a critical element in instructional design. The point of view elaborated here is that certain previously learned capabilities need to be retrieved from the long-term memory and need to be readily accessible in the working memory, whenever a new capability is learned. These resultants of prior learning may support the new learning; an example is the retrieval of a cognitive strategy which permits the encoding of to-be-learned information. At least an equally important function of retrieval of previously learned entities, however, is their incorporation into new learning. When the intellectual skill of adding integers is learned, the previously acquired skill of subtracting whole numbers is incorporated as a part of the new capability. Similarly, when the intellectual skill of making the subject of a clause agree in number with its verb, the previously learned skills of identifying subject and verb are incorporated into the newly learned skill.

Deductive Versus Inductive Learning

Should teachers explain learnings in a meaningful way to students ? If necessary, concrete (objects and items) and semi-concrete (illustrations, films, filmstrips, slides, and transparencies) materials may be used. Subject matter then moves from the teacher to students. Learners are receivers of facts, concepts, and generalizations in deductive learning. Reception learning is then in evidence. Quality learning can indeed occur with students being recipients of subject matter.

Opposite of deductive is inductive learning. Teachers and students need to be able to raise stimulating questions in inductive procedures. Ample opportunities must then be given to ponder, reflect, think, and, perhaps utilize research methods to acquire vital data. Answers to questions or hypotheses are developed by learners. The teacher needs to provide situations whereby students may test and revise, if needed, the attained hypothesis.

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[1]Robert M. Gagne. The Conditions of Learning. Third edition. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1977, page 267.

Problems to be solved should be:

1. significant to pupils.

2. meaningful and understandable.

3. interesting and capture student attention.

4. pertain to life in school and in society.

5. related to provision made for individual differences among learners.

Ediger[2] wrote the following pertaining to advantages and disadvantages of inductive learning:

> . . . educators have rather recently stressed the importance of pupils achieving learnings inductively. Thus, in inductive learning, the role of the teacher consists of
>
> 1. guiding pupil achievement rather than serving as a lecturer or explainer of content.
> 2. stimulating pupils in identifying problems and working toward desired solutions.
> 3. being a good asker of questions rather than a dispenser of information. Questions need to be asked in proper sequence.
> 4. helping pupils realize desired generalizations and main ideas as a result of interacting with a variety of learning experiences.
> 5. developing positive attitudes within learners in wanting to discover facts, concepts, conclusions, and methods of working.
> 6. helping pupils obtain needed materials and aids necessary in inductive learning.
>
> Disadvantages given for inductive learning include the following:
>
> 1. It may take much time in helping pupils achieve learnings inductively as compared to deductively.
> 2. It may not be necessary for pupils to discover content which has been discovered and recorded by others.
> 3. Deductive learnings may be presented to pupils in a purposeful and interesting manner.
> 4. A skillful and responsible teacher can teach well using either the inductive or deductive approach.

A relevant issue then pertains to deductive versus inductive learning for students.

Organizing the Reading Curriculum

How should the curriculum be organizied? Toward one end of the continuum, a separate subjects curriculum may be emphasized. Thus, reading is taught as being unrelated to mathematics, science, social studies, among other curriculum areas. Reading then contains its own scope and sequence. Definite word attack and comprehension skills need to be emphasized with this framework.

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[2]Marlow Ediger, The Elementary Curriculum--A Handbook. Kirksville, Missouri: Simpson Publishing Company, 1977, page 76.

Reading may emphasize a correlated approach. Reading, for example, is taught as being related to social studies. If a story is contained in a basal reader that relates to a social studies unit presently being taught, correlation of content is in emphasis.

The fused reading curriculum relates all language arts areas. Thus, listening, speaking, writing, spelling, punctuation, handwriting, and capitalization are fused. Separate distinctions pertaining each specific language arts component is not emphasized. Rather, the teacher emphasizes relationships and fusions among the diverse language arts areas.

The integrated reading curriculum relates all academic areas, such as the language arts, social studies, mathematics, along with other subject matter areas. Academic disciplines tend to lose their individual boundaries and borders with the integrated curriculum. Shepherd and Ragan[3] provide the following six principles of curriculum organization:

1. Curriculum organization should help to coordinate the efforts of teachers.
2. Curriculum organization should provide a well-balanced school day for boys and girls.
3. Curriculum organization should provide for continuity in the development of the child.
4. Curriculum organization should provide for unified learnings.
5. Curriculum organization must assimilate the best information from all sources.
6. Curriculum organization must take into account the principles of quality, equality, relevancy, and personalization.

An issue then arises pertaining to how much of the separate subjects, correlated, fused, or integrated curriculum should be emphasized in reading.

In Closing

It is significant to attend to issues in curriculum organization.

1. How should scope in the reading curriculum be determined?

2. Who should sequence learnings for students?

3. Should a deductive or inductive procedure be utilized largely in the curriculum area of reading?

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[3]Gene D. Shepherd and William Ragan, Modern Elementary Curriculum. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1982, pages 77 and 78.

4. How should the reading curriculum be organized?

Major guidelines to follow in attempting to synthesize the issues include the following:

1. Students need to perceive interest in learning.

2. Meaningful learnings should be in evidence.

3. Purpose or reasons for participating in ongoing activities need to be in emphasis.

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READING IN THE CONTENT AREAS

Generally, pupils comprehend more readily from a library or trade book as compared to content from textbooks in different curriculum areas in the elementary school. This is true for several reasons:

1. pupils as a whole select library or trade books on their own individual level of achievement in reading.
2. the individual book is usually chosen on the basis of what interests the learner.
3. content is read at a rate commensurate with the child's ability to gain ideas from the reading activity.

In the reading of content from textbooks, encyclopedias, filmstrips, pamphlets, and other reference sources, individual pupils may encounter difficulties pertaining to sentences being excessively lengthy as well as experience difficult concepts and terms. In teaching-learning situations, the following criteria must always be uppermost in the mind of the teacher:

1. learning opportunities must be interesting.
2. pupils must attach meaning to what is being learned.
3. provision must be made for diverse levels of pupil achievement.
4. learners must perceive purpose in learning.

Thus, in the reading of content in different curriculum areas, pupils must experience that which is interesting, meaningful, and purposeful on an individual basis.

Reading Content and Concept Development

A major problem for pupils in reading content in different curriculum areas is comprehending the meaning of relevant concepts. In selected cases, these concepts cannot be interpreted literally. This adds a dimension of complexity to the skill of reading. Figurative terms which pupils may encounter in reading include the following: shuttle diplomacy, inflation, recession, cold war, hot war, ping pong diplomacy, and the bamboo curtain. The teacher needs to provide meaningful learning experiences so that pupils may attach meaning to these figurative terms. If pupils, for example, are studying a unit on "Goods and Services Produced in the United States," they may attach meaning to the concept 'inflation' in the following ways:

1. pupils may bring empty cereal boxes, fruit and vegetable containers, as well as other empty containers found in a supermarket to the class setting. These may be marked in terms of current prices and placed on shelves as is done in a modern grocery store. Learners may play the roles of stockers of shelves, checkout counter personnel, a manager, and persons who help buyers get the food to their "automobiles." Each child should be given play money or should make toy money to buy needed goods.

The price of each item in the supermarket can be marked up in cost. Pupils may then notice how much less in commodities can be purchased the second time as compared to the first time using the same amount of money.

2. Pupils may look through old newspapers and magazines to locate the price of selected items, approximately five years ago. Comparisons

may then be made of the cost of these same items with prices as given presently in selected newspapers and magazines.

Following these learning experiences, pupils should be able to attach meaning to the concept 'inflation' when reading related content in an ongoing unit of study.

A second important problem in reading content in different curriculum areas is that there are selected concepts which basically pertain to a single academic discipline. Thus, in the discipline of anthropology, the concept of culture is very important for pupils to attach meaning to. If learners, for example, are studying a unit on "Visiting the Middle East," they may be provided with the following learning opportunities to better achieve the goal of attaching meaning to the concept of culture:

1. a set of slides or a set of pictures may be shown to and discussed with pupils pertaining to bedouin life. Pupils may observe tents used as homes by bedouins. Learners may discuss how these homes are alike and how they are different from most American homes. Pupils may notice how the dress of bedouin men, for example, differs from that of most men in the United States. The child, of course, will notice that the male bedouin usually wears a headdress, a cloak, baggy trousers, and sandals. Most bedouins eat, among other foods, rice and lamb's meat, and drink tea or turkish coffee. Pupils should have ample opportunities in an atmosphere of respect to compare native bedouin food with that of American foods. They should also observe that bedouins prefer sitting on the floor as compared to using chairs. They also eat with their hands rather than utilizing knives, forks, and spoons. These are just a few examples given to aid pupils in understanding the concept of culture in the curriculum

area of anthropology.

A third problem in reading in the content areas may be that pupils are to attach meaning to concepts which are highly abstract. The concepts of cooperation, justice, democracy, socialism, conservatism, and liberalism are very abstract terms indeed. One cannot directly see justice, democracy, socialism, communism, conservatism, and liberalism in the same manner that boys, girls, cats, dogs, stones, and soil are observed. The learner, for example, can only infer from a variety of learning opportunities as to what is meant by cooperation. Thus, within a specific committee, an observer can notice the following pertaining to cooperation or a lack of it:

1. Are participants working together in the ongoing learning activity?

2. Do individuals in an atmosphere of respect share ideas, materials, and equipment?

3. Do all participants in the committee actively participate in needed tasks until they are completed?

It is true that individuals will differ from each other in defining what is meant by "committee members cooperating" in committee endeavors. However, there will be some common selected agreements as to the meaning and definition of the concept "cooperation." Cooperation within a committee comes in degrees. Members within Committee A may exhibit behavior which reveals more cooperation as compared to Committee B. Additional comparisons may be made with other committees such as Committee C and Committee D. Thus, it becomes quite complex to attach needed meanings to an abstract concept such as cooperation. First

of all, one cannot see "cooperation" in the same manner as a concrete object such as "car" can be seen. Secondly, definitions differ from individual to individual as to the meaning of an abstract concept such as cooperation. Thirdly, abstract concepts are not absolute terms.

A fourth problem in reading in the content fields is that pupils attach accurate meanings to words as they are utilized in context. There are selected words, of course, in the English language which have multiple meanings. The pupil when reading in the content areas must determine the meaning of a word with multiple meanings as intended by the author or writer. Thus, it behooves the teacher of social studies to guide pupils in the direction of using content clues effectively. The meaning of a word then may be determined by its relationship to other words within that same sentence or paragraph. By relating a word which has multiple meanings to other known words in a sentence or paragraph, the learner can, in many situations, attach meaning to the specific term or concept. Direct teaching should aid pupils in using context clues to determine the meaning of selected words, terms, and concepts.

In Summary

There are selected pupils who have much difficulty attaching meaning to specific concepts when reading in the content areas due to the following reasons:

1. literal meaning may not be applicable since words are used figuratively or in a metaphorical manner.

2. there are selected concepts which pertain to a single academic curriculum area only.

3. some concepts are highly abstract in meaning.

4. multiple meanings may be attached to a single word.

Teachers must identify concepts which pupils are to attach meaning to. These concepts then become objectives in teaching-learning situations. A variety of interesting, purposeful, and meaningful learning experiences must be selected to guide learners in achieving the desired objectives. Continuous evaluation must be in evidence to determine if pupils ultimately understand the identified concepts when reading in the content areas.

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4. Tiedt, Iris M., and Sidney W. Tiedt. Contemporary English in the Elementary School. Second Edition. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975.

5. Walcutt, Charles Child, et. al. Teaching Reading. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1974.

EVALUATING PROGRESS IN READING

A competent teacher is a good evaluator of learner achievement. The teacher must determine how much a pupil has learned as well as diagnose difficulties experienced by the latter in learning. Being a proficient appraiser of pupil progress aids the teacher in providing appropriate sequential learnings for learners. Thus, learners may experience optimal development in learning if proper sequence is experienced in diverse tasks and activities.

There are a variety of means which may be utilized to appraise pupil achievement. Evaluation techniques utilized in appraising progress should stimulate further learning on the part of pupils. Educational literature, as well as the lay public in general, places high values or priorities on the basics or the three R's in the curriculum-reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Helping pupils attain optimal achievement in the reading curriculum through the utilization of relevant evaluation techniques will now be discussed in this paper.

The Pupil and Evaluation

There are diverse programs of reading instruction which a given school may emphasize. These plans among others include utilizing programmed reading, basal readers, individualized reading, the language experience approach, and linguistic methods of teaching and learning. The following criteria need to be followed in determining if a pupil is ready to benefit from any one specific plan of reading instruction.

1. pupils need to show interest in these reading materials.
2. purpose must be perceived to participate in ongoing reading experiences.
3. any selected plan of reading instruction must provide for individual differences.
4. pupils need to experience appropriate sequential learnings in reading.
5. learners should develop feelings of success and possess an adequate self concept as a result of experiencing reading activities.

Thus, the objectives, learning activities, and evaluation techniques utilized in ongoing units of instruction in reading should aid each learner to achieve optimal development. These three facets of the reading curriculum-objectives, learning activities, and evaluation-should be interrelated and not separate entities. Learning activities aid in achieving objectives. Evaluation pertains to how effective each learning activity was in guiding pupils individually to achieve desired ends. Tinker and McCullough[1] write the following pertaining to appraisal of reading growth:

> Many problems will arise if the teacher assigns materials that are too difficult or attempts to teach a skill without having prepared an adequate background for it. Avoiding such problems requires a careful evaluation of reading performance. Thus, the appraisal of reading growth is closely tied in with the instructional program. However, accumulation of

[1]Miles A. Tinker and Constance M. McCullough. Teaching Elementary Reading. Fourth Edition. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975, page 349.

> reading test scores is not enough. Such scores will not clearly reflect many aspects of a child's actual and potential performance in relation to the various methods of teaching reading skills and to his life situation. By day-to-day observation and frequent informal checking of pupil performance, the teacher can discover how best to adjust instruction to the precise needs of each student. Evaluation means discovering the degree to which the objectives of the teacher's reading program are being achieved.

There are diverse techniques which may be utilized to appraise pupil achievement in reading. The following, among others, are well known methods:

1. use of standardized tests and teacher written test items.
2. use of rating scales, checklists, and attitudinal inventories.
3. frequent appraisal of oral reading of a pupil to determine proficiency in word attack skills and pronunciation.
4. oral discussion of content read to ascertain comprehension skills of learners.

Additional techniques which may well be utilized to appraise progress in comprehending content can be challenging and stimulating to learners.

Thus, after having completed the reading of a library book or story from a reputable series of basal readers, the learner may reveal content comprehended by completing a diorama. The diorama, being a three dimensional scene in an appropriate size of paper box, would reveal what a pupil has obtained in

terms of facts, concepts, and generalizations from the completed reading experience. Thus, art activities are correlated with reading and may well provide a springboard for participating in additional reading activities.

Evaluation procedures need to be varied to develop and maintain pupil interest in reading. Thus, a pupil, or several learners, having completed the reading of the same library book (or story) may develop a related mural utilizing diverse art media. Pupils will reveal comprehension in reading with content being presented in the mural.

To reveal comprehending sequential ideas in reading, a pupil may develop a frieze. The frieze may be planned showing three or four sequential scenes. Again, a variety of art media may be utilized in the frieze. It is important, as a comprehension skill in reading, for pupils to gain sequential ideas.

A learner may develop a pencil sketch revealing comprehension of content gained from reading a library book. The sketch would, of course, be based upon the present achievement level in art, as well as in acquired related ideas, of the learner completing the project. Unrealistic standards need to be avoided in appraising pupil achievement.

A pupil, after completing the reading of a library book or story from a basal reader may individually pantomime selected parts. No spoken words generally are utilized in this type of dramatic activity. Two or more learners having read the same selection may utilize creative dramatics to indicate comprehension of selected main ideas. Spoken words are used

spontaneously as the need arises in the ongoing dramatic activity. Several readers could also cooperatively write play parts for significant characters within a story or library book. Related background scenery may also be developed. Writers of the play parts may choose on an individual basis which character's role they wish to portray when giving this presentation to other classmates or to learners in another class. A reasonable amount of time would be given to this activity to attain desired ends in reading. Thus, a highly polished performance would not be desired here, but rather a presentation would be preferred which indicates pupil comprehension of content read.

A pupil or several pupils having read the same selection may cooperatively plan and create puppets pertaining to characters in a story or a book. The characters may be represented by stick, sack, papier-mache, and/or sock puppets. Adequate time must be given to complete the puppets, develop appropriate speaking parts for each puppet, and give the presentation to the teacher as well as other members of the class.

Cassette recording of summary statements of a story or book by a learner may also be a fascinating way of revealing comprehension! The pupil presenting the report should listen to a replay of the contents. This activity may well help a learner to increase proficiency in the area of oral communication of content.

A pupil individually or in a committee may develop a "movie set" pertaining to ideas comprehended in reading. The cardboard box used for the movie set may measure approximately two feet long by two feet high. The depth of the box may

measure approximately one foot. Two dowel rods need to extend through this box. A roll of paper, suitable for making illustrations and writing content, should extend around these dowel rods. Pupils may thus record ideas in written and picture form on the paper pertaining to ideas comprehended in reading.

Other methods which may be utilized by learners to reveal comprehension in reading may well include the following:

1. developing or completing a crossword puzzle.
2. completing a bulletin board display.
3. writing an outline of a relevant section.
4. taking notes on selected content.
5. influencing another pupil to read the same library book or story by presenting pertinent reasons.
6. writing a different ending for the completed reading selection.
7. discussing content read with three or four other learners who have read the same selection.

In diverse means of appraising pupil comprehension in reading, the following purposes need appraisal:

1. reading critically and creatively.
2. skimming content and reading to acquire facts.
3. gaining ideas sequentially.
4. reading to achieve main ideas and generalizations.
5. reading for recreational purposes.

As the need arises, pupils should receive assistance in identifying new words. These word recognition skills include utilizing:

1. picture clues.
2. phonetic analysis and syllabication.
3. structural analysis.
4. configuration clues.
5. context clues.

In Summary

There are diverse methods available to appraise pupil comprehension in reading. Appraisal procedures utilized should stimulate pupils in wanting to read content which guides each to achieve optimal development in this important curriculum area!

It is significant for teachers to appraise their own teaching in order that each pupil may achieve to his or her highest potential in reading. Hough and Duncan[2] write the following:

> Evaluation of teaching is engaged in for the purpose of self-improvement so that teachers can make better judgements and thus render better service to their students. The evaluation of teaching requires the judicious and skillful use of a specialized body of professional knowledge and skill. This knowledge and skill is used in a rational way that yields new professional knowledge for the teacher and leads to better decision making concerning (1) what shall be taught to particular students, (2) how it shall be taught (instruction), and (3) how student learning can be more accurately measured.

[2]John B. Hough and James K. Duncan. Teaching: Description and Analysis. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1970, page 373.

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